



# The TURNTABLE

March 2012

NEWSLETTER FOR THE PAID & VOLUNTEER STAFF OF RAILTOWN 1897 STATE HISTORIC PARK

## Upcoming Events

**March 3rd & 4th** 8am-4pm  
GCOR Training at  
Jamestown Community Hall  
(except Sunday am, which  
will be at Railtown until  
noon)

**March 6** 11:30am  
Ladies Luncheon at  
Hooligans Irish Pub in  
Jamestown

**March 9** 10am-Noon  
Shop Tour/ Carriage Room  
With Kim Baker

**March 10** 9am-3:30pm  
"Telling The Railtown Story"  
w/George Sapp, John Rand,  
Laverne Coon,  
Lisa Smithson and David  
Deutsch

**March 17** 9am-3:30pm  
"Telling The Railtown Story"  
w/Joe Von Hermann  
Joe Sparagna and Kim  
Baker

**March 24** 9am -3:30pm  
Car Host Training & Pre-  
Season Practice Train  
w/ Dave Connery,  
Bob Gibson, Tommy John-  
son

**March 31 & April 1**  
Opening of the train excu-  
sion season

**April 3**  
Ladies Luncheon @  
Black Oak Café, 11:30am

**April 21**  
Fire Patrol Training  
w/ Anthony LaNotte

**May 5**  
Fire Patrol Training  
w/ Anthony LaNotte

## Keep Railtown Rolling!

By Delta Pick Mello, Membership and Community Relations Director  
California State Railroad Museum Foundation

That's our battle cry -- to keep this unique treasure of the mother lode open for visitors all over the world to enjoy and appreciate. The question is how? How can someone help keep Railtown open for future generations? One answer is through donations of membership.

Becoming a member of Railtown 1897 is a crucial first step to creating a base of individuals who care enough to want to be involved for more than a casual visit. When you join Railtown, your membership donation is given to the 501(c)(3) nonprofit cooperating association, the California State Railroad Museum Foundation. Those memberships and donations, along with additional support from the Foundation, are then given back to Railtown to help fill the gap between the State Parks budget and Railtown's operating needs. You can encourage visitors who want to know "how can I help?" the best thing they can do is to become a member.

## Changes in Membership Benefits for 2012

Previously membership fees were priced as follows:

\$25 Handcar Club; \$35 Hostler; \$50 Telegrapher;  
\$100 Freight Agent; \$250 Yardmaster In 2012, Railtown  
membership fees have increased as follows:

\$25 Handcar Club (no price or benefit changes)  
\$40 Hostler (no benefit changes)  
\$65 Telegrapher

Additional benefit:

Free Admission to CSRM and SSRR Excursion  
Train Ride (excluding first class El Dorado)

\$125 Freight Agent

Additional Benefit:

Free Admission for 2 to over 550 participating  
museums in the North American Reciprocal Program (NARM) located across  
the U.S.

\$250 Yardmaster (no price changes)

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North American Reciprocal Program (NARM) located across the U.S.

Current members may renew before March 30, 2012 at the old rate with the additional benefits regardless of their renewal date. New membership forms will be available for opening weekend of Railtown's Excursion Train Ride.

Thank you all for your dedication to Railtown. If you have any questions about membership fees or benefits, please call the CSRMF membership office in Sacramento at (916) 445-5995 or email me directly at [dmello@csrmf.org](mailto:dmello@csrmf.org).



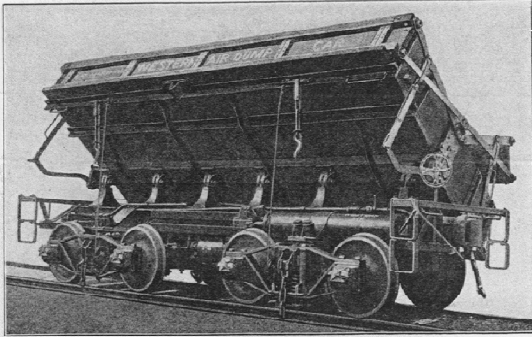


Fig. 64—Dumping Position of Western Air-Operated Dump Car. Builder, Western Wheeled Scraper Co.

(from the Car Builders Dictionary, 1916)

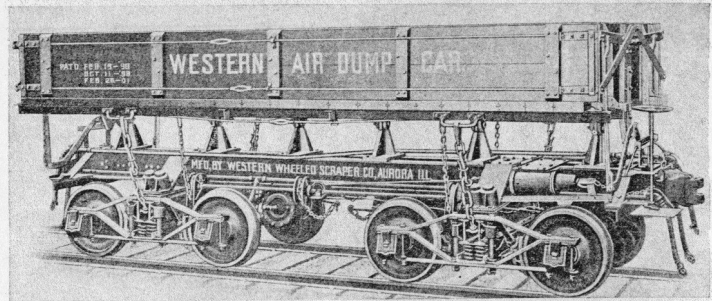


Fig. 95a. Contractor's Air Dump Car. Capacity, 12 cu. yds. Western Wheeled Scraper Co., Builders.

(from the Car Builders Dictionary, 1906)

### About Railtown's Side Dump Car Collection

If you have been to Railtown recently, you have probably noticed the strings of air dump cars, blackjack hopper cars and some tank cars on the pass track and house tracks. These old cars are most impressive in a string, and we are lucky to have several of each type for display. Here is some information on the side dump cars, which are so impressive because of their high profile and the "ancient" condition of the wooden ones. All of the side dump cars were manufactured by Western Wheeled Scraper Co. While Western Wheeled Scraper Co was formed in 1891, its predecessor company dates back to 1877.

Side dump cars such as these were regularly used in railroad construction and maintenance. Dirt and ballast could be moved and used where most needed. By the 1840s or earlier small 4-wheel side dump cars were in common use on railroads. Air-powered dumping was developed for larger cars starting in the first decade of the 20th century. Even today such cars still see regular service, albeit rather larger versions of these cars. Sierra #190-191 came to the Sierra in 1938 from the Sugar Pine Lumber Co (via the Southern Pacific, which had foreclosed on the Sugar Pine Lumber and so owned the equipment). Shortly before the bankruptcy the Sugar Pine Lumber Company had acquired control of the Yosemite Sugar Pine Lumber Company which connected with the Yosemite Valley RR via a big incline. These are the steel bodied cars in the middle of the string. Sierra #192-194 and #195-197 were previously owned by the San Francisco-based contracting firm of Palmer & McBryde, later S. H. Palmer Co. It is still not known when they arrived, but the journals were repacked by the Sierra RR in Nov 1939, so they were on the property by that time. Cars #192, 193 and 194 are the shorter profiled wooden cars. Car #194 was wrecked at the Atlas gravel plant at some point and no longer exists, but the other 5 cars remain at Railtown, along with the 2 from Sugar Pine Lumber – 7 total. The cars collectively represent the evolution of air-powered dumping technology in the early 20th century by Western Wheeled Scraper, one of about 3-4 important manufacturers of side dump cars at the time.

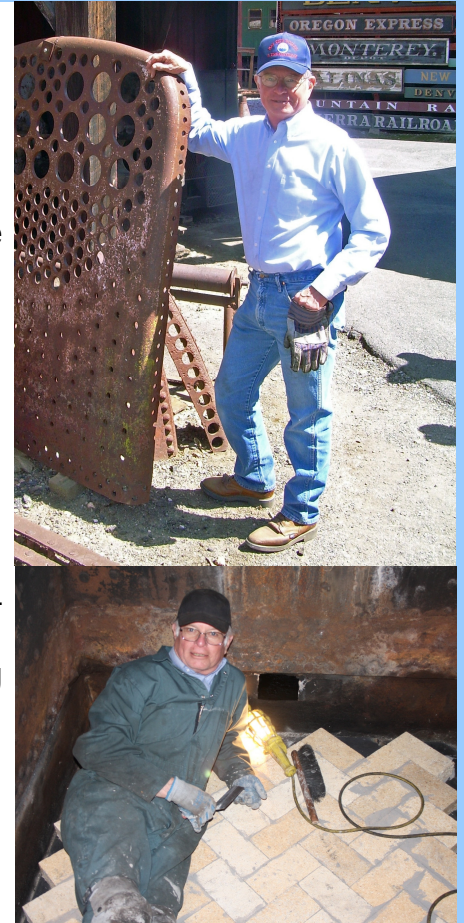
Other companies, which had their own development of air dump technology at the time, include Kilbourne & Jacobs, Koppel, Magor, Oliver Mfg., and others. Western Wheeled Scraper patent developments are as follows; Cars #192-193 represent the 1st generation and design of air dump technology. The initial patent application was filed in 1905, and issued in 1907. The control valve was also patented about this time. Cars #195-197 represent the 2nd generation and design of air dump technology, with application filed in 1908 and issued in 1909. Cars #190-191 represent the 3rd generation and design of air dump technology. This fundamental design is still in use today on modern cars.

Kyle K. Wyatt  
(Edited by Lisa Smithson)



### Volunteer of The Month—David Ethier

Volunteers at Railtown always bring to our park different skills that prove invaluable. This month say hello to David Ethier, a retired state boiler inspector. He came to Railtown along with his wife Karen in 2009 and has logged over 100 hours in the firebox of the #28, over 200 in the #2 and over 200 hours on the #3. Born in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, he moved to California when he was 5 years old and spent his growing up years near Modesto, Riverbank and Oakdale. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in marine engineering at the California Maritime Academy and sailed around the Pacific for six years in the merchant marines. After working as a stationary engineer for several years, he was hired as a state boiler inspector. He retired after 31 year. *"I love the family atmosphere here at Railtown and the fact that we all have fun together. But the big thing is, I really like working on the locomotives."* David has also worked as a tour guide, a demonstrator of our belt drive shop (on school days) and was very instrumental in installing our magnificent lighting on the Starlight Express trains. His wife Karen also volunteers doing ticket sales, greeting and working as an office assistant. They have two boys and four grand kids who call him 'choo choo'. For hobbies other than trains, David likes to hunt and knapp. No not afternoon naps. Knapping is the art of making arrowheads out of obsidian. He and Karen also play the ukulele in Peg Reza's Ukulele Orchestra. From ukuleles to boilers, we'd like to give a big nod and thanks this month to David!



### Getting Ready for Opening Day

Please join us on March 24<sup>th</sup> at 9:00, for our "Practice Day". This is the day to get the wrinkles worked out, before opening day on March 31<sup>st</sup>. Opening Weekend is traditionally our busiest weekend, so this is a great opportunity to get warmed up before the crowds hit. Bring a sack lunch, and at 2PM we will do an unadvertised run for the public. Also on the 24<sup>th</sup>, at 11:00 AM, Ken Roy will be leading the training for ticket agents. New and continuing ticket agents should attend this meeting, as we will be reviewing the new cash register. All Junior Volunteers should plan to be here for a 10AM meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup>. After this meeting, Jr. Volunteers will be joining the on-board training run at 11. We have several new Jr. Volunteers joining us this year, so we will be discussing scheduling & procedures, and also brainstorming ideas you've had for fun things to do with park visitors.

See you then!

Kim

### Sign Up Early

Opening day is soon upon us. We are actively scheduling Car Hosts, Walking Tour Guides, Greeters, Roundhouse Hosts and Ticket Agents. Please email or call in your availability for each weekend in April. Our train consist for the first two weekends will be engine #3, #12 car (or 14) and the caboose. Early sign up is recommended, first come, first serve. (209) 984-4408, [darainwater@parks.ca.gov](mailto:darainwater@parks.ca.gov)

### Help Wanted

We are looking for two interested volunteers to work hosting occasional caboose parties. Duties may include story telling, car hosting, and decorating. If interested call or see Alexa in the Depot Store.



**RAILTOWN 1897**  
State Historic Park

**PO Box 1250**

**Jamestown, CA 95327**

**Return Service Requested**



**TO:**

**Depot Store-** (209) 984-3953  
**Volunteer Desk-** (209) 984-4408  
**Docent Site-** <http://railtown.team.parks.ca.gov/volunteers>  
**Railtown Blog-** [www.railtown1897.wordpress.com](http://www.railtown1897.wordpress.com)  
**Crew Caboose-** (209) 984-0352



### **Railtown Paid and Volunteer Staff Contact Information**

*Newsletter submissions: [RailtownNews@parks.ca.gov](mailto:RailtownNews@parks.ca.gov)*

*(all area codes are 209)*

<b>Kim Baker</b> , Park Superintendent	984-4622	<a href="mailto:kbaker@parks.ca.gov">kbaker@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>George Sapp</b> , Railroad Restoration Lead Worker (DSLE)	774-6368	<a href="mailto:gsapp@parks.ca.gov">gsapp@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Lisa Smithson</b> , State Park Curator I (DER)	984-3119	<a href="mailto:lsmithson@parks.ca.gov">lsmithson@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Ryan Richelson</b> , Maintenance Supervisor	984-3115	<a href="mailto:rrichelson@parks.ca.gov">rrichelson@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Rob Buchanan</b> , Park Maintenance Worker I	984-3115	<a href="mailto:rbuchanan@parks.ca.gov">rbuchanan@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Danny Taylor</b> , Park Maintenance Assistant	984-3115	<a href="mailto:dtaylor@parks.ca.gov">dtaylor@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Dave Rainwater</b> , Park Aid & Volunteer Coordinator	984-4408	<a href="mailto:darainwater@parks.ca.gov">darainwater@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Ron White</b> , Stationmaster and Asst. Crew Caller for Car Hosts	551-7087	<a href="mailto:rbarryw@att.net">rbarryw@att.net</a>
<b>Carl Rudolph</b> , Crew Caller Fire Patrol	586-9905	<a href="mailto:cakr@sonnet.com">cakr@sonnet.com</a>
<b>Laverne Coon</b> , Office Assistant and Ticket Agent Caller	984-4408	

*Newsletter Available in Alternative Format on Request*